



WREKIN

**WREKIN COLLEGE  
WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**



## WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

**This policy and guidelines needs to be read alongside other school documentation including:**

- Adults Living in Boarding Accommodation Policy and Declaration
- Anti-Bullying and Child-on-Child Abuse Policies
- Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy (includes permissible sanctions and use of reasonable force and physical restraint)
- Code of Conduct for All Staff and Governors
- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Data Protection Policy - Confidentiality of Information
- E-Safety and Online Safety Policies
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Grievance Procedure (Staff)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines
- Support Staff Dealing with Pupil Poor Behaviour Policy

**Other relevant documentation:**

- Boarding Mission Statement (available on the school's website, in the Parents' Handbook and Pupil Handbook)
- Keeping Children Safe In Education - September 2022
- Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards - September 2022

**The Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards** expects that a school should have, and follow, an appropriate policy on whistleblowing. Ref. to Appendix A of the Boarding Schools NMS.

Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards - the full document may be viewed at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1102344/National\\_minimum\\_standards\\_for\\_boarding\\_schools.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1102344/National_minimum_standards_for_boarding_schools.pdf)

**Whistleblowing for employees:** <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

**There is an independent authority on whistleblowing: Protect** - website: <https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

The website contains all relevant legislation, policy and publications for those concerned about malpractice. It provides free, professional and personal advice, a campaign to change policy, and provides a consultancy to employers.

The person responsible for this policy, in consultation with key personnel, is the Deputy Head (Pastoral)/Supervising Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

<b>Date document updated</b>	<b>Document updated by</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Location of saved file</b>	<b>Date of next revue</b>
July 2013	SEC	Use of restraint now recorded on Google Drive	Google Drive	July 2014
July 2014	SEC	Policy amended to include detailed ref to use of restraint (from the policy)	Google Drive	July 2015
July 2015	SEC	Added ref to changes made elsewhere e.g. names of policies.	Google Drive	July 2016
July 2016	SEC	Added ref to changes made elsewhere e.g. names of policies.	Google Drive	July 2017
July 2017	SEC	No changes made	Google Drive	July 2018
July 2018	SEC	Changes made with ref to KCSIE September 2018 and changes to other policies e.g. Peer-on Peer Abuse Policy added.	Google Drive	July 2019
July 2019	SEC	Changes made with ref to KCSIE 2019.	Google Drive	July 2020
August 2020	SEC	Changes made with ref to KCSIE 2020.	Google Drive & website	July 2021
January 2023	AWr	Changes made with ref to new NMS and KCSIE Sept 2022	Google Drive & website	Jan 2024
May 2025	DBI	Changes made with ref to KCSIE 2024. DSL, DDSL names updated	Google Drive & website	May 2025

## WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

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### Introduction

The school is required to have procedures in place for responding to allegations or suspicions of abuse.

**This policy is on the school's Google Drive and is also published on the school's website.**

**A whistleblower is defined as** a person who in good faith reports certain types of wrongdoing. The wrongdoing that is disclosed must be in the public interest. This means it must affect others.

#### **Complaints that count as whistleblowing**

- A criminal offence, e.g. fraud
- Someone's health and safety is in danger
- Risk of or actual damage to the environment
- A miscarriage of justice
- The company is breaking the law, e.g. doesn't have the right insurance
- You believe someone is covering up wrongdoing

#### **Complaints that don't count as whistleblowing**

Personal grievances (e.g. bullying, harassment, discrimination) aren't covered by whistleblowing law, unless your particular case is in the public interest. Personal grievances should be reported under the employer's grievance policy.

From [www.gov.org.uk/whistleblowing](http://www.gov.org.uk/whistleblowing)

### Safeguarding and Child Protection

Some people within the school have considerable power over other adults and pupils. Research into the causes of abuse within residential settings has clearly shown a link between those who are in a position of power and an abuse of that power. It has been shown that staff who were aware of abuses taking place would not speak out for fear of victimisation from their bosses.

### Aims

- A member of staff has the right, and a responsibility, to raise **genuinely** held concerns about any aspect of the school or the conduct of its personnel or others acting on behalf of the school. This includes abuses of power and trust by colleagues towards pupils.
- To work with other schools and the Local Authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

- To ensure that genuinely held concerns are raised, and effectively addressed, by people working for Wrekin. This policy also covers whistleblowing by other people who come into the school in an official role e.g. pupils on placement and inspectors from outside agencies.
- A genuinely held concern might be about the following:
  - Illegal and unacceptable behaviour, for example a member of staff having a physical relationship with a pupil
  - Misuse of school budgets
  - Poor standards of physical and emotional care
  - The 'cover up' of a serious incident.
- **No one exercising their right to raise a concern in the public interest under this policy will be penalised for doing so.** Any attempt to victimise staff, volunteers or pupils for raising genuine concerns, or to prevent such concerns being raised, will be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

### **This policy does not replace the school's:**

- Grievance Procedure
- Complaints Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines

### **This policy does not:**

- Require staff, volunteers, governors or pupils to prove that their suspicions are well founded. However, they must have reasonable grounds for their suspicions.

**Under this policy managers are required to act promptly and appropriately when concerns have been raised.**

### **Personal Awareness**

Staff **MUST** read through the practice guidelines on safeguarding and child protection issues. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Guidelines are on Google Drive and are also published on the school's website.

### **Who should a member of staff contact?**

**Everyone is encouraged to talk directly to their line manager about concerns without having to necessarily involve outside bodies.**

**HOWEVER, ALL CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS MUST BE REPORTED TO** one of the Designated Persons for Safeguarding and Child Protection.

At Wrekin these are:

David Blackham (Supervising Designated Safeguarding Lead - DSL)

Jill Spence (Day-to-Day Designated Safeguarding Lead - DSL)

**Within the school the Head can always be directly contacted by any of his staff. Similarly any member of staff or pupil can also directly contact the Chair of Governors.**

**Staff and pupils are required under Independent Schools Inspectorate, to have access to the following address and phone number:**

**Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI):** CAP House, 9-12 Long Lane, London EC1A 9HA.  
Telephone: 020 7600 0100 Email: [www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)

**If concerns are related to a child protection issue, email: [concerns@isi.net](mailto:concerns@isi.net)**

**Staff can also ‘whistleblow’ to members of the school’s Governing Body.**

**The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline** is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## **Raising a Concern**

People who contact another person in order to whistleblow must be prepared for their concerns to be taken further.

**No one can expect their concerns to be kept confidential, but they can be reassured that they will not be victimised subsequently. Whistleblowing is rooted in the need to keep people safe; it is not about getting other people into trouble.**

## **What will happen if I raise a concern?**

This will depend on what the concern is. The matters raised may be:

- Investigated internally by an appropriately skilled and experienced officer, knowledgeable in the area concerned;
- Referred to the Police;
- Referred to the External Auditor or the Local Government Ombudsman

To protect individuals, initial enquiries will always be made to decide whether an investigation is appropriate and, if so, what form it should take.

Concerns or allegations that fall within the scope of specific procedures (for example, child protection, discrimination issues or other specific protocols) will normally be referred for consideration under those procedures. Some concerns may be resolved by agreed action without the need for investigation.

## **What is the procedure if I raise a concern?**

### **Stage 1**

- All concerns should be made in person or in writing.

- The person raising the concern may wish to receive help from the local authority or from their trade union representative.
- At any future meeting the employee may be accompanied by a colleague or their trade union representative.

## Stage 2

- Within 10 working days (or as soon as reasonable if during a school or public holiday period), the person with whom the concern has been registered acknowledges receipt in writing.
- The letter will state the following:
  - How the concern will be dealt with
  - How long it will take to provide a final response
  - Information on employee support service
  - If the matter is not being investigated, the reason why.

## Stage 3

- After initial enquiries have been conducted, a decision will be made if an investigation should take place.
- The investigation will be either:
  - An internal investigation
  - A referral to the Police
  - An external independent enquiry

## Stage 4

- The employee will be informed in writing of the outcome of the investigation by the Governing Body.
- The employee has the right to take their concern to an independent body if they feel it has not been addressed adequately.